

Adult Education Research Trends in Japan

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1. Introduction(*Y)

After World War II, Japanese society was greatly changed by the occupation policies of the USA. The positivist philosophy of the USA also influenced the purpose and methodology of adult education research in Japan.

Japanese adult education research trends after 1945 can be divided into the following four stages:

1945-1955 The End of World War II - Rapid Economic Growth

1955-1975 Rapid Economic Growth - International Women's Year

1975-1984 International Women's Year - Lifelong Learning Movement

1984- Lifelong Learning Movement - Present Time

(1) 1945-1955 (The End of World War II - Rapid Economic Growth)

During this period "The Survey on Literacy of Japanese People" was conducted in 1950 by the National Institute for National Language under the guidance of Mr. John C. Pelzel, a social anthropologist affiliated with the CIE. This was the largest survey of the time. Its purpose was to examine how the post-war occupation policies of the USA affected the degree of illiteracy among Japanese people.

Remarks:

1. (* O) Chapter written by Kaoru Okamoto
2. (* Y) Chapter written by Makoto Yamaguchi

In 1950, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture conducted the “Public Opinion Survey on Social Education” to identify future basic policy directions. The board of education of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government also published the study “Research on needs for Adult Education” (1951) and the “Survey on the Present Situation of Women’s Organizations.”

In 1952, Japan participated in the “Social Tension Survey” conducted internationally by Unesco for the first time after World War II. Japan also joined Unesco’s international research study on the “Social Impact of Modern Technology.”

(2) 1955–1975 (Rapid Economic Growth – International Women’s Year)

It can be argued that in the 20 years between 1955 and 1975, Japanese society experienced changes which had previously taken European countries 100 years to undergo. To confront such rapid changes, a tremendous number of research efforts were instigated by experts, researchers, organizations and institutions, especially in the fields of rural developments, urban problems, industrial issues, crimes and social pathology.

(3) 1975–1984 (International Women’s Year – Lifelong Learning Movement)

In the latter half of the 1970s, a number of nationwide surveys were planned and carried out as part of a series of programs to provide the general public with information on learning opportunities.

1977 Survey on paid leave for education (Ministry of Labour)

1978 Survey on lifelong education (Ministry of Education, Science and Culture)

Survey on lifelong education at the Prefectural level and in designated cities
(Ministry of Education, Science and Culture)

1979 Delphi survey on lifelong education in the future, (Ministry of Education, Science and Culture)

Survey on the development of lifelong learning systems in residential areas,
(Ministry of Education, Science and Culture)

The UN International Year of Women Conference in 1975 provided one of the first

opportunities to discuss women's problems on a worldwide basis. In response to some of the issues raised at the conference, the Prime Minister's Office of the Japanese Government conducted a survey called "Public Opinions on the Equality between the Sexes" to identify the directions and priority areas of future policies. A national action program was also established and made public in 1977. Since 1977, in all 47 prefectures except one, a variety of research surveys and action programs has been initiated to examine local women's issues. Since then there has been a great deal of research into areas such as women's work outside and inside the home, decision-making, life courses, women's studies and volunteer activities.

(4) 1984- (Lifelong Learning Movement - Present Time)

In 1988, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture was restructured into 12 major departments, one of which was the Lifelong Learning Bureau. At the same time a law concerning the "Development of Systems to facilitate Measures for the Promotion of Lifelong Learning" was introduced. As a result of this law, the Lifelong Learning Council was established in 1990 as an advisory body to the Minister of Education, Science and Culture.

The surveys in the late 1970s, as well as series of discussions and reports from the National Council on Educational Reform (1984-1987) resulted in the instigation of a number of innovative programs aimed at developing lifelong learning. These are as follows:

- 1985- Program for promotion of volunteer activities in the social education institutions
 - Program for regional lifelong learning information network systems
- 1988- Program to designate "model communities" for the development of lifelong learning
- 1989- Program for the promotion of networks of lifelong learning institutions
 - Program for women's lifelong colleges
 - Program to promote creative advice in lifelong learning
- 1991- Programs for regional recurrent education schemes

The following social and educational statistics indicate the present life profile of

the Japanese :

Social Indicator :

Population (1991)	124.043 million
Birth rate (per 1,000 in 1991)	9.9
Life expectancy at birth (1990)	male 75.9 female 81.9
Ratio of population (% , 1990)	0-14 18.2, 15-64 69.8, 65- 12.1

Labor force, participation rate (% , 1990)

male 15-24 age group	43.4,	25-54	97.1,	55-	61.7
female 15-24	44.8,	25-54	64.2,	55-	30.3

Part-time employment (% , 1990) male 8.0 female 73.0

Monthly hours worked (hours, 500 employees or more, 1991) 170.0

Marital status of female workers, Non-agriculture (% , 1991)

never married 33.1 married 57.8 divorced/widowed 9.1

Monthly salary men US\$ 2903 women US\$ 1785 (61.5% women - men)

Ratio of unemployed persons (% , 1991) 2.1

Foreign labor (1.000 persons, 1989) inflows 72.3, stocks 49.4

Per Capita GNP (US\$ 1990) 23,801

Real economic growth rate (% , 1991) 4.4

Educational Indicator :

Ratios of entering institutions (% , 1990)

Lower secondary schools 99.99

Upper secondary schools 95.0

Higher education 56.4

2. General Status of Adult Education Research in Japan(*Y)

Any kind of planned research activity is based on certain needs. These needs may be either pure academic curiosity (e.g. in the case of university research) or the requirement of data and/or information for specific policy (e.g. in the case of mission oriented researches in government agencies).

Most education research is planned and carried out at the initiative of the national education authorities. In the academic field of adult education, research workers organize research groups at their own initiative either at inter-university level or within academic associations. Financial assistance is offered by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture or certain non-profit making foundations. The nature of such activities is study or survey rather than individual or joint research. The objectives of the academic organizations are to organize and develop research projects in adult education and to apply the results in practical adult education activities.

These activities include :

- publication of journals and other materials
- annual meeting and other meetings
- active cooperation with related domestic and overseas academic associations.

The financial sources of adult education organizations are membership dues, donations to the organizations, and financial assistance by the public authorities.

The academic associations concerned with adult education are :

- The Japan Society for Study of Adult Education
- The Japanese Association of Lifelong Education
- The Japan Society of Educational Sociology
- The Japan Comparative Education Society

The National Institute for Research Advancement (NIRA, established 1974) is a policy oriented research organization established through the initiative of 145 eminent people from the individual, labour and academic communities. NIRA promotes comprehensive research development (basic, applied and developmental research based on specialized knowledge of the economy, society, technology and other areas) to contribute to the understanding of various issues in contemporary society and everyday life. Adult Education has not been much priority placed on research field from 1991-1995.

3. Concept of Adult Education(*O)

To define adult learning, the Japanese have used the term “social education”. This term is probably the equivalent of “liberal adult education” in the West. It does not necessarily lead to specific vocational/professional qualifications. Instead, an adult’s main reason to learn may be intellectual curiosity, cultural aspiration, sporting needs, improvement of, their quality of life, mental satisfaction with life or just for fun and pleasure.

It should be noted that the Japanese, including education experts such as officials of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, often confuse “Lifelong Learning” and “Social Education”. Lifelong learning is perceived in Japan as a master concept which encompasses all learning activities including formal education, sporting and cultural activities, recreation and out-door activities. Social education is just a small part of this.

The prevailing confusion between the two terms can be ascribed to the restructuring which took place in 1988, when the Lifelong Learning Bureau was established, transforming the former Social Education Bureau. The change was introduced to develop the aspect of learning for fun and pleasure which is a major part of non-formal education in Japan. As a result of these changes, one should be very careful of the term “Lifelong Learning” used by a Japanese because it could mean either “all learning activities” or “non-formal education” depending on the situation and the person.

4. Areas of Research and Methodologies used(*Y)

According to the paper “Bibliography of Social Education and Lifelong Education” (1983-1991) published by the Training Institute of Social Education in the National Education Centre, research on adult education can be divided into the following twelve areas :

(1) Learning activities

Target group : men, women, old adults, enterprises

(2) Learning consciousness

Target group : men, women, old adults

(3) Learning interests/needs

(4) Learning information

(5) Learning program

(6) Learning evaluation

(7) Recurrent education

(8) Learning administration

(9) Volunteer activities/social participation

(10) Leader issues

(11) Leisure activities/sports

(12) Learning conditions

Research Conducted by Prefectural Governments and Municipalities

Over the last ten years, 50% of the research in adult education has focused on learning consciousness and learning activities. Since 1987 research on adult education has increased rapidly at prefectural level. This can be related to the fact that, pre-1985 the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture had controlled the provision of lifelong learning information systems. Since then control has expanded to municipal level.

Research on leisure activities, especially sports for older adults has been conducted since 1987. This is because the numbers of older people are increasing, so much so that a game called "Gate Ball" has become so popular that a national tournament has been held.

Questionnaire analysis was the main method of research while the Delphi method was occasionally preferred. Sometimes combinations of questionnaire and case study were used.

The research on consciousness, interests, activities of learning and volunteer/social participation include studies concentrating solely on women. The UN International Year of Women in 1975 focused research on women's issues. Since 1977 there has been a great deal of research on women's issues to aid the preparation of a plan of action at prefectural and municipal levels. The volunteer activities and social participation of women have been the main areas of study.

Table 1 Adult Education Research Trends (1983-1991)

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	Total
Learning activities										
men & women	2		1	1	3	1	3	4	2	17
men				1						1
women		1		1						2
old adults	1			1	1					3
enterprises					1		1	1		3
Learning consciousness										
men & women			1		2	1	8	9	14	35
men			1							1
women										-
old adults		1					1	1		3
Learning interests/needs										
men & women	1			1	1			1	2	6
men										-
women										-
old adults										-
Learning information							1		3	4
Learning program							1		1	2
Learning evaluation					1					1
Recurrent education									1	1
Learning administration					5		1		1	7
Volunteer activities/ social participation										
men & women	1	1			1	1				4
men										-
women				1						1
old adults				1		1				2
enterprise			1	1						2
Leader issues						3	1		2	6
Leisure activities/sports										
men & women										-
men										-
women										-
old adults		2			4	2	1	2	3	14
Learning conditions										
time allocation of living			1				1	1	1	4
opinion of living			1				2	1	2	6
living condition					3	1	1	2	3	10
consciousness							2		5	7
Total	5	5	6	8	22	10	24	22	40	142

Source: Prepared by Makoto Yamaguchi from "Bibliography of Social Education and Lifelong Education (1983-1991)" published by the Training Institute of Social Education, National Education Centre, 1993

Table 2 Research on Women in Prefecture (1983-1992)

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	Total
Consciousness	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	14
Consciousness & living											
ordinary women	2	2	6	6	1	4	5	4	4	6	40
aged women	1		1		1	1					4
working women		1									1
self employed women			1	1							2
Mass media & women			1								1
Working consciousness							1				1
Women's issues	1	1	2	1	1	1	1		1	1	10
Social participation	3	1		1	1				1		7
Officer's consciousness					1						1
Women's future (Delphy)									1		1
Total	10	6	12	11	6	7	8	5	8	9	82

Source: Makoto Yamaguchi prepared from Data Base of National Women's Education Centre, 1993

Table 3 Research on Women in Municipalities (1983-1992)

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	Total
Consciousness	6	2	3	3	1	4	6	2	5	7	39
Consciousness & living											
ordinary women	3	6	2	3	2	1	3	1	1	3	25
old women					1		1	1			3
working women	1	1						2			4
self employed women			1								1
Women's health							1				1
Women's marriage							1				1
Women's work						1					1
Social participation					2						2
Women's issues	2		1	1	3	3	1	1	1		13
Officer's consciousness						1			1		2
Total	12	9	7	7	9	10	13	7	8	10	92

Source: Makoto Yamaguchi prepared from Data Base of National Women's Education Centre, 1993

In Japan volunteer activities and social participation are considered a part of educational activities. Research has also been conducted on the awareness of equality between men and women and sex-roles and present conditions. Women's participation in adult education research does not seem to be equal with men. However, women researchers are predominant in the areas of study centring on women's issues.

Research on women has been conducted mainly by the section responsible for women's policy in prefectural or local government. There are also about 215 women's centres at prefectural as well as municipal level, some of which conduct research.

In Japan research on adult education is both qualitative and quantitative. However, it should be noted that qualitative research could be better explored.

Research on Adult Education conducted by Main Institutions and Organizations :

National Institute for Educational Research

Research on adult learning awareness, 1990

NHK Research Institute of Broadcasting Culture

Research on the life expectancy of Japanese people, 1990

AIR University

Research on student trends at the AIR University, 1986

Research concerning Adult Education conducted by the Central Government

The following research has been conducted by the Central Government during the last ten years :-

Ministry of Education, Science and Culture :

Research on lifelong projects in the prefectures, 1987

Prime Minister's Office :

Research on public opinion of awareness of living conditions, 1987

Research on public opinion of participation in sports by older adults, 1987

Research on older adult's participation in communities, 1988

Research on public opinion of reading and public libraries, 1989

Research on awareness of the free time of Japanese people, 1990

Economic Planning Agency

Research on utilization of the abilities of older adults, 1983

Research on analysis of the structures of free time activities for the formation of communities, 1984

Research on lifelong leisure learning, 1987

Research on new lifestyles of women, 1987

The Japan Society for Study of Adult Education

The Japan Society for the Study of Adult Education was founded in 1954 and has a current membership of 800. There are two kinds of study and research activities. These are individual study and joint research study.

1) Individual studies :

Individual studies are various and are based on the interests of researchers. They may be divided into the following categories :

1. Principle and History
2. Social Education Law and Social Education Administration
3. Comparative Education
4. Learning Theory
5. Youth Education
6. Education for Women
7. Community Education for Children
8. Education for Workers
9. Education for Farmers
10. Others

2) Joint research studies :

Joint studies are carried out at two levels :

1. An annual subject addressed by society
2. Joint studies which are not the subject of an address

The annual subject for the following year is chosen from four or five subjects of studies. These studies are carried out at the same time as the annual subject. Annual subjects have included the following topics. The results were published.

- 1984 Changes in life structures and social education
- 1985 Today's society and youth education
- 1986 Policy on lifelong education and social education
- 1987 World trends in social education
- 1988 Today's family and social education
- 1989 Modern theory for adult learning
- 1990 Human rights today and social education
- 1991 International Literacy Year and Japan's literacy issues
- 1992 Systematization of lifelong learning and social education
- 1993 Five-day schooling with two-day holidays

5. Organizational Structure and Management of Research(*O)

Practices in the National Education Authorities (Structure, Organization/Management, Discussion, etc.)

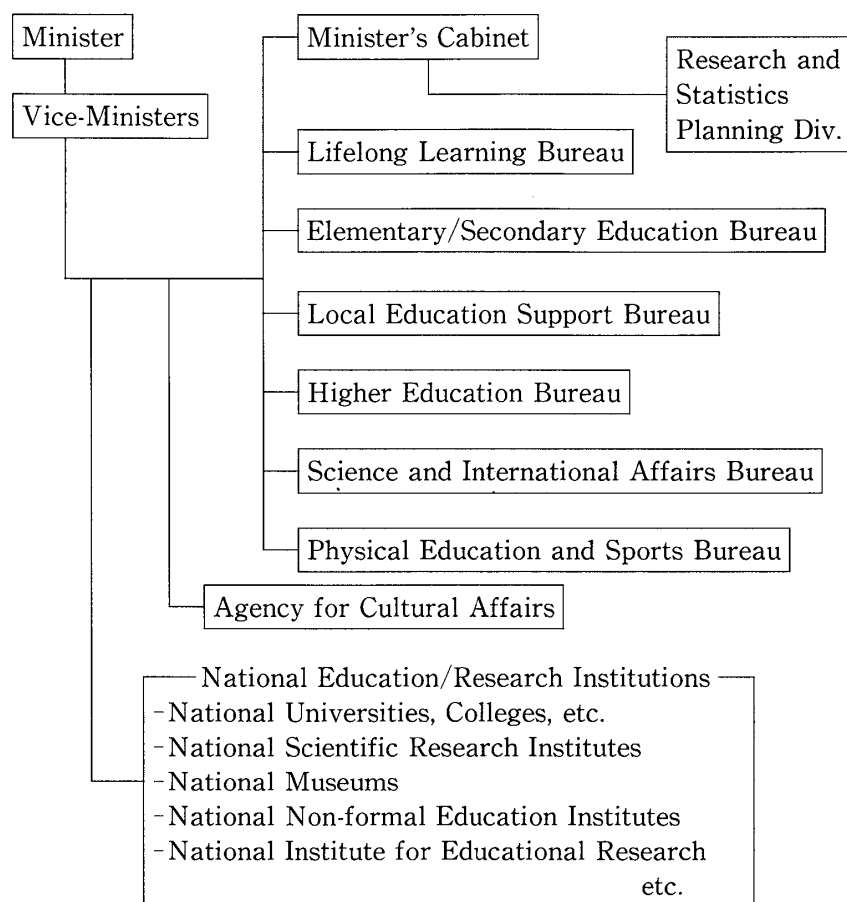
(1) Structures of the National Education Authorities

Discussing the organization and management of adult education research in the national education authorities, it may be helpful to know the structure of the relevant authorities in the government. The national education authorities in Japan is called "the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture" ("Monbusho" in Japanese). Chart 1 shows the structure of the Ministry. Among the major Bureaus, the Lifelong Learning Bureau is in charge of both lifelong learning in general and non-formal education (including adult education).

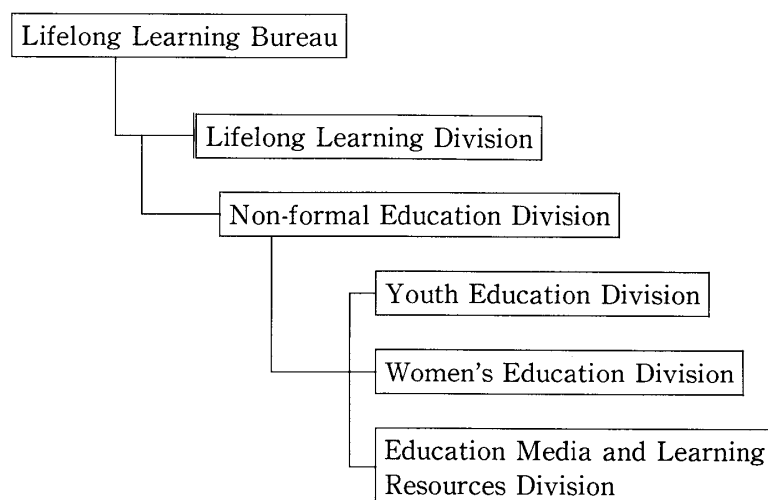
Chart 2 shows the structures of the Lifelong Learning Bureau of the Ministry. This Bureau has twofold missions : a) the planning and coordination of ministry-wide policies and measures to promote lifelong learning as a whole (including formal education, sports and cultural activities) and b) policies and measures of non-formal education for adult, youth/children, women, etc.

Chart 1

Structure of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (Monbusho)

**Chart 2**

Structure of the Lifelong Learning Bureau of the Monbusho



These missions are carried out by the following five divisions :

i) Lifelong Learning Division

Ministry-wide planning and coordination of all policies for the promotion of lifelong learning (including formal education, non-formal education, sports and culture).

ii) Non-formal Education Division

a) General planning and coordination of non-formal education policies/measures encompassing those in the following three divisions ;

b) Genetic policies and measures for the promotion of non-formal education (construction of local facilities, training of specialists, development of programs and materials, etc.) ;

c) Provision of non-formal learning opportunities for adults (except for women).

iii) Youth Education Division

a) Provision of non-formal learning opportunities for youth ;

b) Construction and management of national/local youth education facilities, training of youth education experts, etc.

iv) Women's Education Division

a) Provision of non-formal learning opportunities for women ;

b) Construction and management of national/local women's education facilities, training of women's education experts, etc.

v) Education Media and Learning Resources Division

Development of computerised information networks on learning opportunities, education media, learning resources and materials, etc.

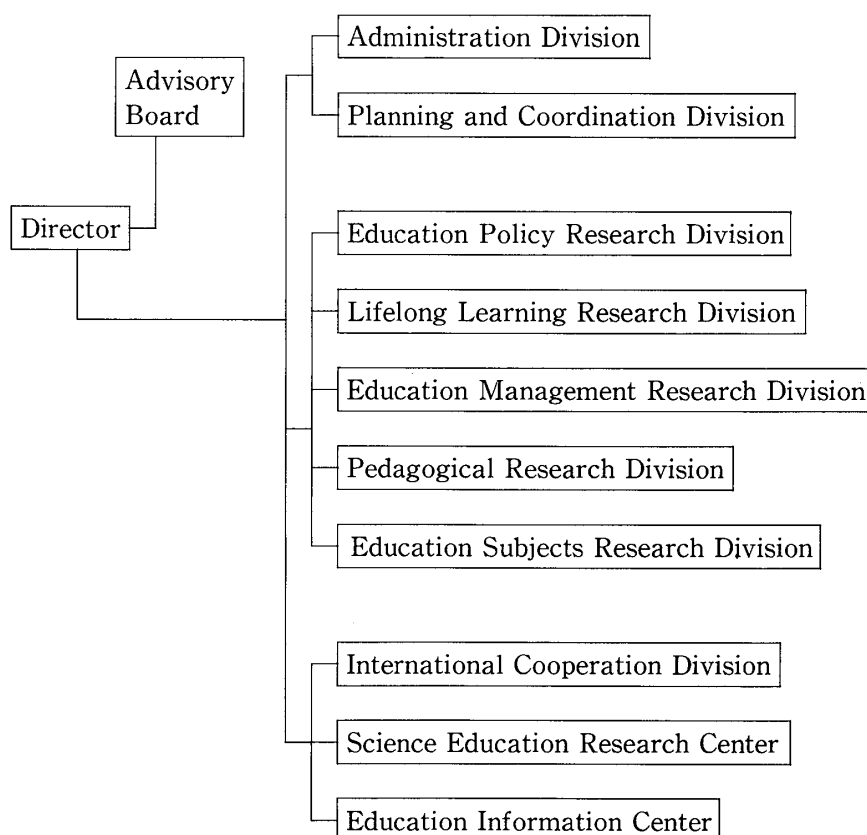
Chart 3 shows the structure of the National Institute for Educational research, which is one of the mission-oriented attached institute of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. One can find another confusion between lifelong learning and non-formal education in the research practices in the National Institute for Educational research. It seems that the majority of researchers in the Institute believe that “lifelong learning” is a synonym of “non-formal education”, and the majority of research themes and areas of the Lifelong Learning Research Division of the Institute virtually belong to the area of non-formal education.

(2) Determination of Policy-oriented Research Priorities

(Education Research by the Initiatives of the Bureaus and Divisions of the Ministry)

As has already been mentioned, any kind of research activity is planned based on

Chart 3
Structure of the National Institute for Educational Research



certain needs. These needs may be pure academic curiosity (e.g. in the case of researches in universities) or the necessity of basic data and/or information for specific policy-making (e.g. in the case of mission-oriented researches in government agencies). The majority of education researches planned and carried out by the initiatives of the national education authorities seem to belong to the latter category.

All Bureaus of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture shown in Chart 1 have such needs for their own policy-making for specific issues in their respective policy areas. Therefore, it is considered not only extremely difficult but also inappropriate to make a ministry-wide coordination of the planning and practices all research needs and planning in the Ministry. This means that education research activities are planned and carried out by each Bureau and/or Division of the Ministry independently.

When a Bureau or a Division of the Ministry needs to plan and carry out a research, it has five options to be taken to do so :

- a) to plan and carry out it by themselves (usually by organizing an ad hoc committee composed of experts out of the Ministry) ;
- b) to have a contract research with an outside university, think tank, research institute, etc.
- c) to ask the Research and Statistics Planning Division of the Ministry to plan and carry out it ;
- d) to ask the National Institute for Educational Research to plan and carry out it ; or
- e) to cooperate with international organizations (e.g. OECD, UNESCO, IIEP, UNU, etc.) with the coordination of the International Affairs Division of the Ministry.

Concrete organization and management of research activities through the about channels/methods will be described in the following section of the present paper.

Education Research by the Initiatives of the National Institute for Educational Research

The National Institute for Educational Research was established as an attached institute of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture with a view to contributing to the policy-making of the Ministry through its researches. Therefore, the Institute has been carrying out both researches requested by the Ministry and those planned by its own initiative.

It seems good for the Institute to do researches by their own initiative, in addition to those requested by the Ministry, in order to keep the researchers' curiosity as well as the academic vitality of the Institute as a whole. However, it is argued that the Institute has been putting much too emphasis on its indigenous researches compared to those requested by the Ministry, the latter of which are for specific policy issues/purposes. It is the Ministry's side that has been making efforts to change such a situation mainly by facilitating the communications between the two parties.

The Research and Statistics Planning Division of the Ministry, which is in charge of the liaison with and the supervision on the Institute, organizes regular meetings of the representatives of all Bureaus of the Ministry and the heads of all Divisions of the Institute. These meetings provide the participants with opportunities to exchange views and policy/research trends on both sides.

(3) Organization and Management of Education Research

The following paragraphs will discuss concrete research organization and management of the above four cases.

In-house Education Research by Individual Bureau and Division of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture

The majority of education research (including those in the field of non-formal education and adult education) is planned and carried out by this methods. In this method, the purpose and the framework of the research are determined by the Division of the Ministry in charge of the corresponding policy issue. However, since the Division does not have enough number of specialists and experts in it, who have

enough expertise and time to be used for the research, it is the most usual practice to organize “an ad hoc committee” composed of 10-20 outside experts. The committee meets frequently to discuss the methods of the research, and concrete practices (e.g. data collection, statistical works, etc.) are done by either the staff members of the Division or some members of the committee. Based on the outcomes, usually some members of the committee carry out the analysis, and the whole committee discusses the report.

Some of the merits of such a methods are :

- a) a wide range of experts from various sectors (e.g. university professors, experts from other ministries, specialists in local governments, journalists, etc.) can be mobilized ;
- b) the Division can quickly organize and plan a research project without considering the capacity of the National Institute for Educational Research ; and
- c) it easy to focus on the specific target issues without considering other problems (e.g. academic autonomy).

It is argued that the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture used this method most frequently among the government ministries and agencies. This seems to be normal because the duties and roles of the Ministry need an extremely wide range of expertise covering schooling, higher education, non-formal education, scientific research, sports, culture, etc., and the staff members of the head-quarters of the Ministry and the researchers of the National Institute for Educational Research are by no means enough. A big number of such “ad hoc committees” for education research are established in the Ministry with different functions, areas, levels, etc. and it is difficult even to identify the number.

It should be noted that there have been established not a few Councils in the Ministry (e.g. Lifelong Learning Council, Curriculum Council, Higher Education Council, etc.). However, these Councils are mainly for policy discussions rather than for research.

The followings are some examples of recent research themes under this method in the field of non-formal education ;

- Basic planning of the framework and functions at a possible “National Lifelong Learning Center” ;
- Measures to utilize school functions/facilities for non-formal and adult education, sports and cultural activities ;
- Policy issues and possible systems to foster appropriate appreciation of adult education outcomes ;
- Future planning of the University of the AIR ;
- Methods for the appreciation of volunteer activities ;
- International survey on education in the family ; and
- Survey on the status quo of out-of-school activities of children.

Contract Research to Outside Institutes

The second method is to organize contract research projects with outside institutes such as universities, think tanks, research institutes, etc. Merits and demerits of this method are as follows :

- | | |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| [merits] | a) one can expect high quality of the research because it is carried out by a specialized institute ; |
| | b) the Division of the Ministry in charge does not have to worry about the management ; |
| [demerits] | a) it may be difficult to keep the focus of the research on the specific policy issue and the specific concern of the Ministry ; |
| | and |

- b) the quality of research depends largely on the quality of the single institute (or the researcher in charge).

Statistical research by the Research and Statistics Planning Division of the Ministry

The third method is to request the Research and Statistics Planning Division of the Ministry to carry out the research. This Division has the following functions :

- a) to carry out major (mainly annual) statistical works (e.g. numbers of schools, students, etc.) ;
- b) to organize and carry out ad hoc research projects by its own initiative ; and
- c) to carry out research projects responding to the requests of the Division of the Ministry.

The third method discussed here corresponds to the above c) of the three functions of the Division. However, it should be noted that this function of the Division is quite limited partly because it does not have enough number of experts and partly because its ability and capacity for research are limited compared to those for statistical works.

Statistical Research carried out by the National Institute for Educational Research

The fourth method is to request the National Institute for Educational Research to carry out the research. However, there is no research project carried out by this method now as far as adult education is concerned. There seem to be a couple of reasons for this situation.

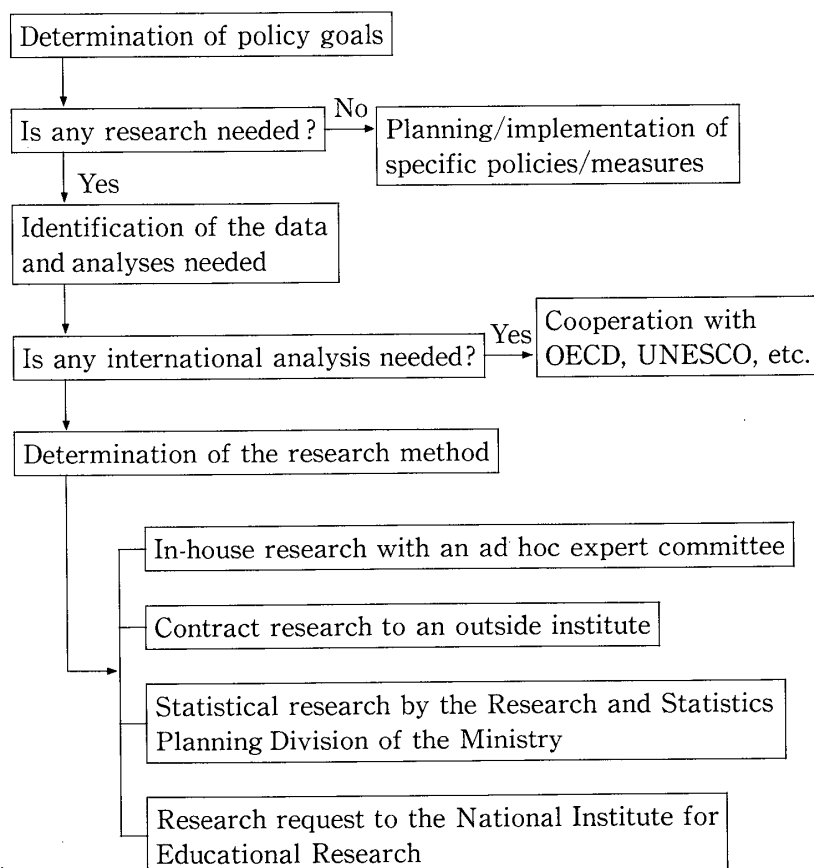
Firstly, it is argued that the researchers in the Institute tend to with to be fully autonomous researchers (just like university professors) and they are reluctant to help the Ministry for its mission-oriented and policy-oriented researches. This inclination has lade the Institute as a whole irrelevant to current policy issues.

Secondly, people in the Ministry also think it tiresome to negotiate with the researchers in the Institute, and they do not expect much of them.

With a view to improving the present situation, efforts are made by the people in the Ministry in charge of the Institute. For example, as has been discussed, regular meetings between the Ministry and the Institute are organized by the Ministry. In addition to such efforts, the Lifelong Learning Bureau of the Ministry has appointed an expert of the Institute as “a Lifelong Learning Policy Adviser”, which is a part-time post to participate in the planning of various policies and measures especially research projects. It is expected that these efforts will have positive effects on the improvement of the communication and cooperation.

Therefore, almost all research projects of the Institute have been organized based on its own initiative, and the following are some of the examples of the recent research

Chart 4



themes of the Institute in the field of adult education :

- Issues of a future lifelong learning society ;
- Lifelong learning in other countries ;
- Demand structure of lifelong learning ;
- Innovative systems for university expansion programs ;
- Regional models of learning opportunities supply ;

6. Dissemination and Utilization of Research (*0)

The methods and networks of the dissemination of research outcomes depend on the nature and purpose of the research. In the case of the researches needed for some basic planning of the Ministry's politics, the scope of the dissemination is rather limited. In such cases the outcomes (e.g. publications) of the research are shared either a) only by the Ministry (including the members of the ad hoc committee), b) by a limited number of specialized institutes and/or governmental agencies, or c) by all sectors of the society including the general public.

In the case of the research projects of which outcomes are to be used by a wide range of people (e.g. local education authorities, higher education institutions, non-formal education organizations, people in general, etc.), the Ministry makes a lot of efforts to disseminate the outcomes. For example, a) the reports are sent to local education boards by mail (to be used in the head quarters, attached facilities, libraries of the local authorities, etc.) ; b) the outcomes are explained in various meetings and conferences organized by the Ministry ; c) more detailed information is given to be used for concrete actions in the training courses for experts, teachers, instructors, etc. organized by the Ministry ; etc.

Almost all outcomes of the research projects are given to the press, and the range of future dissemination among the general public depends on how journalists are interested in them.

The research finding of the National Institute for Educational Research are also disseminated to a wide range of users. However, since the Institute has a stronger linkage with the academic world, it seems that the findings are used more frequently

by researchers than by administrators. The Institute of course sends all publications to the Ministry. However, partly because the Institute's researchers do not necessarily always suit with the policy concerns of the Ministry, the range of the usage of the findings has been limited in the policy-making and administration.

7. Trends in Adult Education Research(*Y)

Most of the education research has been planned and carried out by the public sector. In the academic field of adult education, research workers from varying universities and academic institutions have formed study groups, but their activities are mainly to study and not to research.

There has been some momentum in adult education in the last ten years. For example, the UN International Women's Year (1975), the Measure to Decrease Working Hours (1987), the establishment of a Lifelong Learning System (1984) and the Measure for Promoting Fulfilment of Life and Health of Older Adults (1989) are all policies which have been implemented by government.

In the last ten years, much quantitative research on adult education has been conducted. However, the areas of research are limited. These areas are: learning awareness, learning activities, learning needs and interests, learning conditions, and leisure activities for adults.

After 1987, research on adult education increased rapidly at the prefectural level and then also at the municipal level in 1989. It was influenced by the "Preparation of Lifelong Learning Information Provision Systems" (1985) conducted by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. Research on sports for older adults has also been carried out since 1987.

In Japan, adult education research tends to repeat the same themes or areas. At present Japanese adult education emphasizes both the qualitative and quantitative aspects.

The National Training Centre or Social Education offers a special course of research as in-service training for social education officers. The aim is to offer theoretical and

practical techniques used in social education. It should expand their activities to research. However the centre has no adult education research specialist.

The National Women's Education Centre has a bibliographic database on women, family and learning information. They offer two types of WINET services.

- 1) On-line service - 170 women's centres and institutions are available as of May 1993
- 2) On demand service - Data is retrieved upon request by telephone or mail and is sent by mail. The services are provided free of charge (except for postal charges).

At present, more and more municipal areas carry out research. They can get funding for the research but have no specialists. For that reason they commission research companies. Research and information industries are now emerging in Japan.

8. Research Area and Methodology (*Y)

(1) Research area and methodology

Research areas can be categorized into three levels:

Macro level : National research to plan for the national interest.

Middle level : Research at the prefectural and municipal level to plan programs for people.

Micro level : Research at grass-roots or community level to determine learning needs and actual learning conditions and evaluate learning.

In Japan, the areas and methodology of adult education are limited and do not change. There needs to be a consideration of research already completed. New research areas and methodology should be studied in more detail. Sampling can be a difficult aspect.

(2) Training of research workers

Today, many people have personal computers and information is easily obtained.

There is a lot of data reported, however some information is not gathered scientifically. It is necessary to open a course to train information technicians in adult education research.

(3) Networking of adult education research

Networking is necessary to exchange information and experience, to make joint research efforts and especially to put all adult education research workers on the same level. It is essential that the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture standardize research levels.

(4) Access to outcome of research

There are many databases in Japan. However, there is no complete database on adult education. Deciding who should select and input data is a problem. Legislation is needed regarding the collection of information on adult education.

(5) International co-operation on adult education research

For the exchange of information and experience in the field of adult education, scientific adult education research is the greatest concern at present. Cross-cultural or comparative study is useful to pinpoint the real state of adult education in the country. The Unesco Institute of Education in Hamburg should play a role in establishing a standard in adult education research at the international level and also in the development of this field.